

make clear is that, from [*sic*] our present experience, the individual father today is just as interested as the mother.⁷⁹ The means that he chooses for manifesting that interest or the method that we can offer for serving this interest, may not be the same as that which has come of the women's groups. We need to do more research to determine just what the men want—just what will serve this specific purpose. . . .

Question: Isn't the father's interest similar to the interest the wife takes in the business or professional life of the husband? It must of necessity be once removed. The father's interest will be one more of advisory nature, rather than so much participation that comes from the mother's continuous relationship with the children.

Student: In many cases, mothers assume that their interest is greater than the father's, and relegate fathers to some of the other interest[s] which do not mean so much.

Mrs. Gruenberg: I suppose that there is probably greater difference within each situation than between situations. There will be fathers who will participate more, and mothers who will participate less, but by and large under the present setup, and certainly during the early days, we must admit that the father cannot be specifically concerned in the same manner as the mother. He can be just as greatly concerned, but not in the same manner. Of course, mothers who are out of the house all day are apt to have the same objective attitude as husbands. Take the situation that came to one habit clinic. The little girl of three years was a feeding problem. The mother had to sit there and put the food into her mouth, and the moment the mother stopped talking, she stopped eating. You investigated the whole life of this family. You found there was no substantial agreement between father and mother as to how the child should be managed. . . . It is very essential that parents agree, in general, on some of the major concerns. . . .

Student: What validity is there in the view point that perhaps fathers and mothers are not the best people to take care of their children? In the long run, better trained people are more desirable.

Mrs. Gruenberg: This question arises inevitably and also in relation to sending children away to boarding school or away all day. . . . There are certainly some parents who can be replaced much better. We cannot take it for granted that because a woman has given birth to a child that she is necessarily qualified for all the aspects of its care. She may be very well qualified for certain aspects and not for others. We have introduced an element of choice for the parent. . . . The home has always utilized other people, but formerly you did not have to go out into the community to get them. There were always other adults around a home to whom you could relegate a little of the care of the child. This idea of one woman with one child and tied to that child inevitably, regardless of her desires and inclinations is a new aspect. . . . Sociologically speaking, one